

Around the Nation

U.S. Probe Sought Of 'Spying' by IRS

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MIAMI—Dade County

State Attorney Richard Gerstein wants a special federal grand jury empaneled to investigate an Internal Revenue Service informant's charge that a file cabinet was stolen from a defeated congressional candidate's office after the 1972 election.

The information came up during Gerstein's investigation of "Operation Leprechaun," in which undercover IRS informants, allegedly spied on the sex and drinking habits of Gerstein and 30 other federal, state and local officials here. The informant was Nelson Vega, 22.

Gerstein said prosecution in Florida of the alleged burglary of the office of Republican congressional candidate Evelio Estrella in 1972 is outlawed by a state two-year-statute of limitations. But Gerstein believes federal prosecution is possible.

Estrella was defeated in the election by Rep. Claude Pepper (D-Fla.), another of the alleged spy targets of operation Leprechaun.